

around for somebody who could take that shot. [Laughter] And I want to congratulate Tonya Sampson, who I know has overcome some considerable personal challenges to be the leading scorer in Carolina women's basketball history.

I also want to say something that I have felt for a long time—and it's appropriate this year because North Carolina women's basketball and soccer teams won the NCAA titles, and so often in the past your men's basketball team has done so well—the thing I have always admired about the University of North Carolina is it's been a place that emphasized both academics and athletics and other extracurricular activities. And it's demonstrated to the country that it is not necessary to make a choice, and that there's something to be said for learning how to compete, to work on a team, to put aside your own personal ambitions for what is best for a group, and that an institution like the University of North Carolina, which I had the opportunity to join in celebrating its 200th birthday just a few months ago, can really set a standard for the entire country. And it's something that I hope not only other colleges and universities will look at but our school systems as well.

I get very concerned when I travel around the country and I see so many children growing up in difficult circumstances and they're going to schools that are no longer able to finance their team sports programs, their athletic programs, their music programs, the things that give children a chance to get out of themselves and reach beyond themselves and to grow and be part of something important. And I don't believe those things should ever be held to be in conflict with or adverse to developing our intellectual faculties that God gave us.

So the University of North Carolina is truly a symbol, it seems to me, of what our country ought to be striving for in the personal development of all of its students. And I'm especially glad to see the triumph of the women athletes this year. It's something that my wife and my daughter and my beloved mother, if she were still living, would always be very happy to see me here honoring today.

I thank you all, and I congratulate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to team members Charlotte Smith, forward, and Tonya Sampson, guard.

Statement on Protection of Voting Rights

July 27, 1994

Over the past 30 years, the protection of voting rights, and the resulting increase in the number of minority representatives in Congress, has been a testament to our enduring democracy. Now, it is increasingly clear that a direct attack is being mounted on electoral districts that contain African-American or Hispanic population majorities. In the face of this attack, the position of this administration is clear: We are committed to the gains made by minority voters through enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

When the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965 with support from Democrats and Republicans alike, it was properly viewed as central to our Nation's efforts to eradicate racial discrimination. It seeks not only to increase the number of minority representatives, as important as that is. More fundamentally, it ensures that minority voters have an opportunity to cast

meaningful votes and to elect candidates of their choice, particularly in those areas where politics are racially or ethnically polarized.

At my instruction, Attorney General Janet Reno and Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Deval L. Patrick are vigorously defending the congressional districts that are currently being challenged. Under their leadership the United States has either intervened as a party or become involved as a friend of the court in every one of these challenges. Ironically, these districts are the most integrated congressional districts in the Nation. Under the leadership of Deval Patrick, the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division is working hard to ensure that the Constitution has meaning for minority voters by making the case that these districts stay intact. I agree wholeheartedly that he

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should have all the resources necessary for that work.

In the short-term, the fate of minority voting rights is in the courts. In the long-term, if necessary, I will work with Attorney General Reno and Members of Congress to enact legislation

to clarify and reinforce the protections of the Voting Rights Act. Inclusion of all Americans in the political process is not a luxury; it is central to our future as the world's most vibrant democracy.

Statement on the National Rural Conference

July 27, 1994

Rural America, which makes up a quarter of our population, is vital to the overall development of our Nation's economy and future. This administration is committed to working closely with rural communities in tackling the important issues of jobs, trade, and the preservation of

the family farm as our Nation enters the next century.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing the National Rural Conference scheduled for December 1.

Remarks on Anticrime Legislation at the Department of Justice

July 28, 1994

Thank you very much, Chief Moose, for the introduction and for your lifetime of service to your community and for the wisdom of your words and your leadership. Thank you, Attorney General Reno, for the magnificent work that you and the others here at the Justice Department have done on the crime bill. Thank you, Lee Brown, for the work you did to make sure that we had enough funds in the crime bill for drug prevention and drug education programs and drug treatment programs. Thank you, Secretary Bentsen, for the law enforcement work you do and the comments you made today. And I want to thank all of the Members of Congress who are here. I thank Senator Metzenbaum for letting Joe Biden get even with me by calling you in the middle of the night. [Laughter] I thank you, Congressman Hughes. I thank you, Congressman Schumer, for on occasion being like a mad dog in dealing with these issues. I think you will be proud into a deep, old age for the work you have done on this crime bill, and I thank you, sir.

And I cannot say enough about Chairman Brooks and Senator Biden. I like them both very much, and it's not hard to figure out why when you hear them up here talking. I ran

completely out of my stash of donated cigars trying to get Jack Brooks to keep pushing ahead with every aspect of the crime bill. [Laughter] People always want to know, you know, what did the President give away to get this, that, or the other thing. All I gave away were mountains of crocodile tears and donated cigars because Jack Brooks wanted this country to have a crime bill. Joe Biden, I think you could see by the visible way that he is moved by this, how important it is to him. And I am profoundly grateful to him for that, and for what he said today. It is true that I called him at midnight, and that Joe asked him the next day if he remembered what the phone call was about. I wish I had asked him for a lot of other things, because I'm not sure he did. [Laughter] I could still make assertions about what we've talked about on that late night.

I thank all of you here who have worked on this bill, all the representatives of law enforcement and others who care about having a safer America.

Because the conference was finished just before we started this event, this is truly an historic day. On the verge we are of a major victory for our country. It's been a remarkable week